



The Alabamian

Vol. 92, No. 2 Friday, September 22, 2017

Strong Hall opens doors for coms program



Donors and University officials celebrated Strong Hall's opening with a ceremonial ribbon cutting. Photo courtesy of University Relations.

By JAMIE HAAS

Wednesday, Sept. 6, marked the observation of a monumental event for the Department of Communication at UM: the Strong Hall Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. Although the project first broke ground in April 2017, Strong Hall has been an enterprise more than a decade in the making, and its completion has allowed the communication and mass communication programs to be housed under the same roof for the first time at UM.

According to Steve Peters, Dean of the College of Fine Arts, a facility where these programs could coexist was a feat the faculty had been "wishing and hoping and dreaming" of long before he arrived at UM in 2014.

"The hard edges around mass communication and communication studies and social media have all eroded, and we really needed an opportunity for students in those programs to be able to interact and collaborate with [each other]," Peters said, "The need for a unified home was really about excellence in teaching and learning [in a more] collaborative . . . and multidisciplinary environment."

That sentiment was echoed by professors within the Department of Communication, such as Drs. Finklea and Ford, who said they recognized the value of proximity.

"There are things that can happen because you're frequently seeing somebody or hearing what they're doing, and there's going to be more awareness of what our programs are doing individually so that we can identify collaborative opportunities," Ford said.

"Dr. Hardig and I collaborated on a book chapter a couple of years ago, and it was one of those things where we came up with the idea when we went out to lunch," Finklea said, "and I think about being able to sit down with someone face-to-face and being able to chat about an idea, [how] so much more can come of that more quickly than just emailing across campus."

Opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration are not the only ones emerging from Strong Hall's establishment. With the construction of the new hall came a technology upgrade Peters likened to "going from a bicycle to a racehorse."

"Before in our studio we were standard definition, four by three. We were making great 1980s style television," Finklea said. "Now we are network-level. . . ABC News uses some of that same equipment. Our graphics program is the exact same that runs the graphics in the new Mercedes Benz stadium in Atlanta."

NEWS in BRIEF

By VANDY MYERS

With the growing popularity of Virtual Reality (VR) video games it is easy to expect big gaming brands such as Rockstar, Valve, or EA to jump at the opportunity to announce their own VR titles while interest is high. Nintendo, the popular Japanese console and video game company, is hesitant to join in on the release race. Reggie Fils-Aime, president and chief operating officer of Nintendo of America, said that VR lacks "experiences that are truly fun[.]" at the Variety Entertainment & Technology Summit LA on Sep. 7, 2017, according to Eddie Makuch at Gamespot.com. Coverage by Variety itself of its event quotes Fils-Aime as also saying, "What we believe is that, in order for this technology to move forward, you need to make it fun and you need to make it social." There are currently no plans at Nintendo for developing any VR titles, likely due to these aspects of the genre in its current stage of development.

According to CNN, a new Egyptian tomb was discovered on Sep. 9 2017 belonging to a goldsmith and his wife. CNN also stated that many of the artifacts found inside the tomb were taken outside to be exhibited. It is located near Luxor, the modern city located in and around the ancient ruins of Thebes which sits on the river Nile, in Southern Egypt. According to Egypt's Ministry of Antiquities, the tomb held "mummies, sarcophagi, statuettes, pots and other artifacts."

According to Business Insider, Australian scientists have been investigating near Mount Erebus, an active volcano on Ross Island in Antarctica, for signs of hidden life in the caves melted into the ice by the heat. Dr. Ceridwen Fraser from the ANU Fenner School of Environment and Society spoke to Business Insider about this research, informing that "[I]t can be really warm inside the caves, up to 25 degrees Celsius in some caves." This temperature is equivalent 77 degrees Fahrenheit, around the temperature of an average September day in Alabama, and an ideal temperature for supporting some basic kinds of life like algae, microorganisms, and even small animals. Fraser said trace DNA of these lifeforms was found in soil samples from the caves.

Hurricane Irma devastates Gulf of Mexico

By COURTNEY McCULLOUGH

The University of Montevallo, as well as many other schools and businesses around Alabama, was closed on Sept. 11 and Sept. 12 due to Hurricane Irma and the complications it could bring. Aside from strong winds, heavy rain and a few downed power lines, Alabama did not have many problems with the hurricane. This was not the case closer to the southeastern United States. According to CBS, 31 people were killed in the United States and 38 in the Caribbean. According to ABC, the Florida Keys were also hit. Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Brock Long said nearly 25 percent of homes in the Keys were completely destroyed, with 65 percent suffering from major damage. A resident of Islamorada, an island in the Keys, took refuge at her employer's home. Patricia Morrow said of the storm, "The

water [was] just taking everything out, there was sand everywhere, there were people's belongings just flowing down the canal." According to The Washington Post, about 17 million people are without power. This includes those who live in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Hurricane Irma's winds were fast and strong, clocking in at 185 mph when it was approaching the northern Lesser Antilles. In Cuba, the storm's winds calmed down to about 159 mph. Then in Florida, the storm's speed came down 142 mph. Irma stayed as a Category 5 hurricane for three days, longer than most. This means the storm had wind speeds of 157 mph or higher. The Washington Post also touched on a bizarre phenomenon Hurricane Irma brought about in the Tampa area of Florida. The waters of the bay were disappearing. Sand

was all that was left in a place where water once was. The waters did return, but it was still a strange occurrence. According to CNBC, government officials and locals of the U.S. Virgin Islands say damage caused by Irma was catastrophic and it will take months for the Islands to recover. Dr. Libby Flowers, a doctor on St. Thomas Island, said Irma was worse than Hurricane Hugo, another storm she and her family had endured. "The infrastructure is destroyed. The roads are impassable, the power grid is completely gone, and there is a lot of looting and robbing." Any cruise scheduled to come to the Caribbean Islands have been cancelled. Cruise liners, however, have been a big help in evacuating residents from the islands to Puerto Rico and bringing in supplies when they can. Chrystie Payne, another St. Thom-

as resident, escaped on Monday to Puerto Rico. "The island was 80 percent destroyed and the lieutenant governor is reporting 40,000 people are homeless." According to the U.S. Census Bureau, St. Thomas has a population of 52,000.

CNN had live coverage of the storm and people sending images and short summaries of what was going on. One was a report from Marco Island near Florida about a dolphin who had been washed up on a front lawn. Downtown Charleston, South Carolina was completely flooded. Reports from alerts.weather.gov had flood warnings issued in South Carolina, Florida and even in some parts of Georgia. Relief efforts for those affected by Hurricane Irma have already begun, with people from as far as the U.K. already pledging to help.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

On Campus.....2
Bicentennial.....3
News.....4

Viewpoints.....5
On Campus....6

Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/TheAlabamian





By JASMYNE RAY

James H. McDonald started his work as provost on campus July 1, 2017. Photo courtesy of University Relations.

Walking across campus at the beginning of a new semester you can expect to see a lot of unfamiliar faces. This year, one new face stands out from the rest.

Dr. James McDonald is the newest addition to the University’s administrative faculty, stepping into the role of provost and vice president of academic affairs. Before coming to Montevallo, he was part of the faculty at Southern Utah University, working as both the dean of the College of

Humanities and Social Sciences and as a professor of anthropology, a field he is very passionate about.

Having received his undergraduate degree in anthropology, he’s accomplished a lot in his field, his studies even taking him to South America. In Mexico, he worked with rural farmers and observed how they were handling the changes to their lives due to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and in Guatemala he did field work dealing

with substantial development.

As the provost, all things academic are under his leadership and management. So, during his time at Montevallo, Dr. McDonald wants to make himself as available and accessible as possible to students.

“In many ways [students] are my teacher,” he said. “I’ve got to figure out how students are engaging with the institution and all we’ve got to offer and that will help me understand much better

how we can continue to evolve and improve the institution and what we do and how we do it.”


One of the main things that attracted him to the University was its “student-centric” culture.

“I loved the vibe here. I loved the level of engagement, of interest. You clearly have a deeply committed faculty and staff. People are excited about what they do and how they do it.”




In a statement, President Stewart expressed his excitement

about Dr. McDonald joining the faculty. “His arrival comes at a good time of change and opportunity in higher education and we look forward to him as chief academic officer of Montevallo.”

Throughout the year, students can expect to find him in the caf having lunch, biking around town, walking his dogs on campus or maybe even paddling along in a canoe on the lake.

 **Spotify**®

PLAYLIST



VINTAGE FAVORITES

“September” - Earth, Wind, and Fire

This funk anthem holds a special place in this month specifically. Earth Wind and Fire gave September more character than just the lead up to the holidays and let us party on all month long.

“Rio” - Duran Duran

This is everyone’s mom’s favorite song for a reason. Ideal for wistful night drives through a neon-lit city, Rio is an oddly poignant reminder of a time none of us actually experienced.

“Walk Like an Egyptian” - The Bangles

Maybe it’s the upbeat sound, the unusual lyrics or possibly just the sheer panache of The Bangles, but this song has stood the test of time. While those listening might not know what it exactly means, it is an undeniable jam.

“Roam” - The B-52s

While it may not be as ubiquitous as some of their other works, Roam holds strong as one of The B52’s most timeless jams. The feeling of open air and open road is palpable in this song, making it a mainstay on road trip playlists.

“Heart of Glass” - Blondie

Few artists truly capture the 80s in their rawest essence quite like Blondie. The atmospheric nature of this song makes it easy to picture yourself scrubbing punch from a gaudy, puffy-sleeved party dress in the bathroom at your senior (class of 85) prom.

“Tubthumping” - Chumbawumba

This party classic truly captures a raucous night in a lyrically simple song. While the activities in this song are somewhat unwise, it holds strong as a party anthem.

“It’s the End of the World” - R.E.M.

This song has possibly persevered for so long because it strikes the perfect balance between the nihilistic worry and upbeat mania felt across younger generations. No matter the condition, this song has the listener feeling fine.

“Karma Chameleon” - Culture Club

This track is on the more twangy side of Culture Club’s discography, and with a chorus that’s sure to stay stuck in your head for hours.

Fashion On the Bricks: Dadcore



By LILY DICKINSON and MAGGIE SANDERSON

A recent, albeit unexpected, trend in fashion among college students is something your dad might wear. A variety of dad-centric couture is making a resurgence in both clothing and accessories. This look, known as Dad Fashion, features a myriad of options, comprised of “flannels, old band t-shirts, hawaiian shirts and the boyfriend jeans and mom jeans kind of style,” as sophomore Sara Walley said. We talked to a couple of hip daddy-o’s to find out more. Walley, decked out in her neon-colored hawaiian shirt, de-

scribes Dad Fashion as, “kind of a branch of the hipster, vintage look, or a thrift-store find.” Besides the obvious appeal of fatherly fashion, a great draw to it for Montevallo students is the comfort and versatility. “It’s really nice because you can layer, also, so it’s like a flannel, and then a t-shirt or a tank top and it works with a variety of occasions, like if you have a presentation in class you can have more of you know, office dad look or if it’s a casual day, you know, vacation dad,” Walley



Students Sarah Walley and Cameron McGuffie show off their dadcore looks. Photos by Lily Dickinson.

explained.

For those who want to dip into Dad Fashion on a smaller scale, Cameron McGuffie, a sophomore, is ahead of the game. Though Dad Fashion to him brings up images of “old tennis shoes and the really high-up socks with the baseball cap and the type of guy who’s gonna complain about football and stuff,” McGuffie admits that, “It’s kind of funny but at the same time it also looks really nice, in a way, I just find it appealing.” McGuffie participates in the trend

by wearing dad hats, which is another term for a classic baseball cap. McGuffie prefers dad hats over more modern choices, saying, “I don’t like snapbacks cause they fit weird and all the other hats are kind of uncomfortable and these are really nice and comfortable hats that look good and block the sun.” Do you want to jump in on the dad trend? Next time you see your old man, ask him for some fashion tips -- and then raid his closet!

The Alabamian

Farmer Hall,
Behind Post Office
Station 6222
Montevallo, AL 35115
alabamian@montevallo.edu

Editor-in-Chief

Geordie Kennedy

Layout Editor

Laura DeRocher

Managing Editor of Content

Jamie Haas

Photography Editor

Katie Compton

Copy Editor

Madison Griggs

Online Editor

Jasmyne Ray

Contributing writers

Audrey Mecke
Lily Dickinson
Maggie Sanderson
Vandy Myers
Caleb Jones
Waid Jones
Courtney McCullough

Adviser

Tiffany Bunt



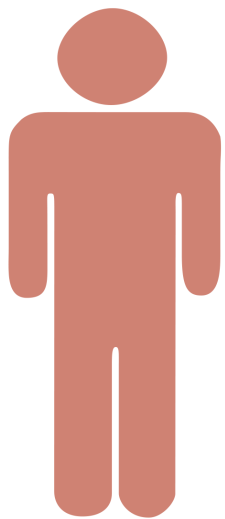
Last Saturday, Sept. 16 the city of Montevallo celebrated its 200th Birthday with music, historians and local art at Orr Park. Attendees enjoyed carnival rides, music and even a birthday cake for the city of Montevallo. The tone for the day was set by beautiful weather in the Park.



Photos by Katie Compton.

Get the stats: Hurricane Harvey

By CALEB JONES



ESTIMATED DEATH COUNT:
82



RAINFALL:
52 INCHES



PEOPLE LEFT HOMELESS:
OVER 30,000

On Friday, August 25 Hurricane Harvey made first landfall in Texas between Port Arkansas and Port Texas. Classified as a category four hurricane, Harvey dropped 52 inches of rain in Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana, breaking the all-time U.S. record for tropical cyclone rainfall. As a result, many areas of Texas experienced severe flash flooding

that left more than 30,000 people temporarily homeless and entire streets underwater. The death toll has been set at at least 70. In the wake of all this, the people of Texas and so many others have stepped up to offer relief to everyone affected. Texans rode through the streets in their boats rescuing people and pets trapped in their houses and even offered supplies

such a food and water. Assisting them was a group of Louisiana good-Samaritans who call themselves “The Cajun Navy” who left Louisiana with their boats and rode to the rescue. Local veterinarians also pitched in to help by offering free first aid to rescued pets, and many businesses and churches opened their doors to provide shelter to those displaced by this

catastrophe. Many celebrities have also provided monetary aid, such as actress Sandra Bullock, NBA star Tim Duncan, comedian Kevin Hart and Houston Rockets owner Leslie Alexander. So what can we here at UM do to help? There are many organizations taking donations for Texas. GoFundMe has made a section on their website specifically for the

relief effort, and Greater Houston Community Foundation has started on their website the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund. Also, the Red Cross is taking donations, which can be done by visiting their website www.redcross.org or by calling 1-800- HELP NOW (1-800- 435-7669).

This day in history:

By WAID JONES



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons

Today marks the anniversary of a gruesome sight. On this day 325 years ago the Salem Witch Trials came to a gruesome conclusion with their final executions. Seven women and one man were executed for crimes related to witchcraft and wizardry. Martha Cory, a woman who was described as “a hearty matron,” had asserted that she did not in fact believe in witches. This unfortunately was the beginning of the end for poor Mrs. Cory. The only other requirements for Mrs. Cory to be found guilty of witchcraft in Salem were the words of a child, “Look! There sits Good Cory on the beam suckling a yellow bird betwixt her fingers!”

Even worse for Mrs. Cory was that her husband adamantly claimed her righteousness. This simple act of devotion landed Giles Cory in the cross hairs of the dreadful Salem Witch Trials as well. Mr. Corey was crushed to death for refusing to accept a trial, when asked for his confession he famously said, “More weight.” The trials continued for another three days after which Mrs. Cory and seven others were executed by hanging.

I wish I could say that this was the last instance of a witch trial in the Americas, but then there was Grace Sherwood in the summer of 1706 when she was tied up and thrown into a lake to determine her guilt. She floated, which to the court proved that she was a witch. Anti-witchcraft laws remained on the books in the U.S. until The Church of Wicca was recognized by U.S. Federal Courts in 1986. This was more than 30 years after the United Kingdom repealed the last remaining parts of The Witchcraft Act, which had been used during the Salem Witch Trials.

FALCON SUPPLY
ART
monteVallo's Art Store

Painting Drawing Photography
Book Making ceramics Fabric Arts
Printmaking mixed & new medias

LARSON · JUHL
CUSTOM FRAMING SHOP

- WE OFFER YOU;**
- **STUDENT DISCOUNTS**
 - **KITS FOR DRAWING 1 & 2-D DESIGN**
 - **STUDENT ACCOUNTS** - YOUR PARENTS CAN SET UP AN ACCOUNT FOR YOU & BE BILLED MONTHLY FOR YOUR PURCHASES
 - **FAST & CHEAP MATTING** - FOR YOUR FOUNDATION & CONCENTRATION REVIEWS



UM ALUM OWNED & OPERATED



**623 MAIN ST MONTEVALLO
ACROSS FROM EL AGAVE**

**9AM TO 5PM MON - FRI.
10AM TO 3PM SATURDAY**

**205-665-2237
FALCONARTSUPPLY.COM**

Movie review: “IT” is a hit

By AUDREY MECKE

Topping the box office for the second week in a row, the movie “It” has already been confirmed as the highest grossing September release ever. During a year full of remakes and sequels, “It” seems to be one of the best so far, surpassing the high expectations already set by fans earlier this year. The trailer for the movie alone already broke the record for most views in one day. It raked in 197 million views in just 24 hours of its release. This is surely due to a stellar marketing campaign, even excluding the “evil clown sightings” from last fall that the production company claimed no responsibility for.

The film itself is both an adaptation and remake of the 1986 Stephen King novel and the miniseries that aired on ABC in 1990. The plot centers around Pennywise, or “It,” being an otherworldly shape-shifting monster that feeds on the fear and flesh of children in the town of Derry, Maine. It’s a “tradition” that’s gone on for decades without question or any sign of stopping – until a group of misfits, lovingly dubbed “The Losers Club” decide to band together to defeat the evil that’s terrorizing their town.

Being a huge fan of horror movies, I was thrilled to see “It” the second I heard the news of a remake. Not only did the 2017 remake meet my expectations, it surpassed them twice over. The

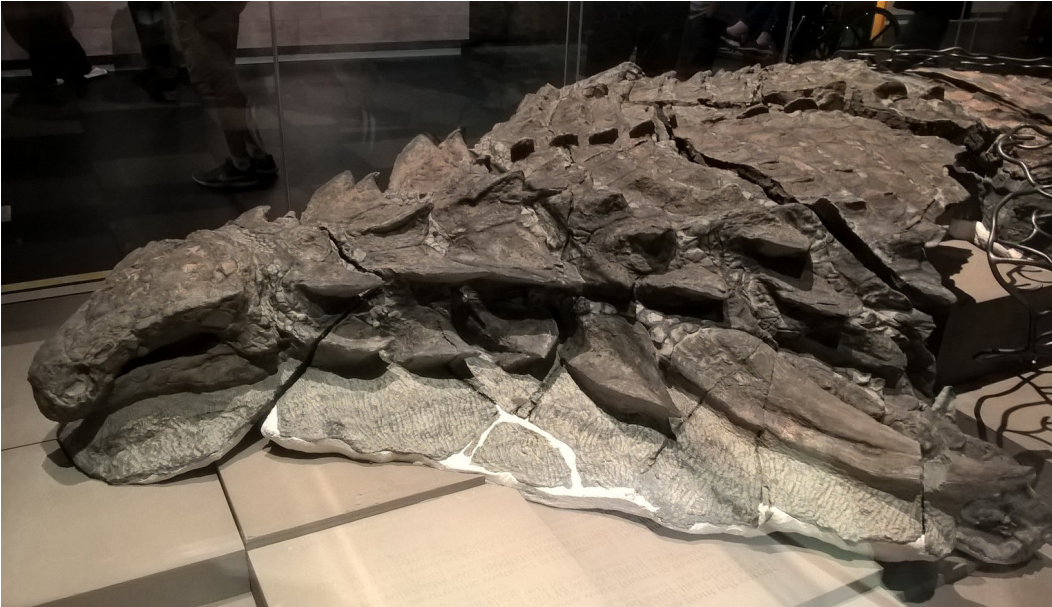
trailer had it cemented that this would actually be a scary horror movie, and it was. There were jump-scars, but they were used strategically to not get oversaturated or into the ridiculous territory. The movie isn’t shy on the gory aspects of the story either. The audience seeing the children protagonists get injured brought a real sense of danger to the plot.

What I wasn’t expecting was how utterly hilarious the movie was going to be. The humor brings so much more charm to the movie than if it were purely a cut and dry slasher. Instead, it makes the movie so much more memorable and unique in how it balanced its suspenseful horror with humor that had me keeled over in my seat from laughing so hard. Trust me, you’ll be snickering at the funny quotes from Eddie or Richie for at least a week.

While the “It” miniseries has iconic cult movie status, the 2017 version definitely stacks up in comparison. Tim Curry’s performance as Pennywise in 1990’s “It” is nothing short of legendary, and even he has given the new movie his praise, as well as Bill Skarsgård’s portrayal of his character. Even though the hype surrounding “It” is still at its peak, I believe it will live on in high regard with a solid place in the modern horror genre. Personally, I already can’t wait to see It again.

Science: Paleontology Conference Recap

By LAURA DEROCHE



Borealopelta markmitchelli is housed at the Royal Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller, Alberta. Photo by Matthew Inabinett

The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology is the main professional association for vertebrate paleontologists. Each year, the society holds an annual meeting where paleontologists present their findings and discuss them with others in the field. This year’s conference was held in Calgary, Alberta from August 23 to 26.

Conference attendees were able to view several different specimens, including a duckbill “mummy” named Laura with well-preserved soft tissue that shows how scales and feathers may have evolved, as well as two ankylosaurs with their armored skin still in place. One of these ankylosaurs, Borealopelta Markmitchelli, even retains the colors it had in life. Borealopelta had a reddish-brown color, and was counter-shaded with darker skin on the top and lighter skin on its underside just like many grazing herbivores today. Its largest pair of spikes were white, and this sharp contrast suggests that the spikes were used for display in addition to defense.

There was also some discussion of possible outreach opportunities to get more people interested in paleontology. The Institute for the Study of Mongolian Dinosaurs aims to open up a traveling dinosaur museum in Mongolia to show local people their rich fossil history as well as to help combat fossil poaching. In fact, several of the fossils exhibited at the conference were reclaimed from poachers.

An important part of the Society’s mission is to “support and encourage the discovery, conservation, and protection of vertebrate fossils and fossil sites.” Trump’s recent executive order to reopen lands set aside for national parks to development could threaten important locations for fossil research, such as Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah where many new dinosaur species have been discovered in the past decade. The society has petitioned congress to continue protecting these lands.

Opinion: Concerns raised over caf

By LILY DICKINSON and MAGGIE SANDERSON

The saddest sight to see: a cup of lukewarm water sitting on a table as a poor, broke college student stares at it forlornly, wishing for just a few cubes of ice to cool their drink on a hot September day. Unfortunately, this sight is becoming more and more common to see as students here at Montevallo suffer the effects of changes in the cafeteria.

When people think of cafeteria food obviously no one expects fine dining, but the conditions of the cafeteria here on campus have reached a new low. With the new set-up enacted over the summer, we are seeing too few drink machines, one less waffle iron, an increase in traffic in inconvenient areas near seating, and more junk food to contribute to the freshman fifteen.

Freshmen might not know that before this year, there were two other drink machines across from the grill, now replaced by an entire counter of desserts. Currently, all students who are forced to buy meal plans must share the two drink machines squished by all of the tables surrounding that area. This has led to the aforementioned ice drought, and has been a source of consternation to students and faculty alike.

Not only is there not enough ice to sufficiently chill the drinks of Montevallo students, but frequently the cafeteria is almost out of, or completely out of, cups and utensils. Of the cups that do remain, many are rife with cracks or are insufficiently cleaned. And who can forget the fork famine of last semester?

Dr. Martin, director of the Montevallo Honors Program and assistant professor of game studies and design, noticed this same issue and lodged a formal complaint with Chartwells, who were less than receptive. Martin sent an email saying, “The removal of the drink machines from the back of the [cafeteria] seems a poor decision. Not everyone wants dessert but most everyone needs a drink. The congestion on the left side with the only remaining drink

machines is heavy with tables too close and people stepping all over each other. Please return at least one drink machine to where it was. The desserts are spread out and don’t really take up the whole bar.” She was met with a rather evasive response from Chartwells, claiming that the machines were removed due to lack of interest in soft drink consumption. Though what most students on this campus have experienced is contrary to this. “I have to believe that they did their due diligence with a consumer study to know exactly how much fluids were being consumed and that their assessment is accurate,” Martin says, “even though the results seem different than what I have personally viewed during lunches.” It certainly seems that Chartwells has been steadfastly resisting change for no apparent reason. But will the cafeteria remain complacent in response to our complaints? History says yes, they will. Last semester, a bill was proposed in Freshman Forum for the cafeteria to add common allergens contained in the food onto their labels. Sophomore Nick Norris, last year’s Freshman Forum president, says, “The bill was written, but before taking it to Senate, I took the idea to some of the administrators over the [cafeteria] first to try to get a plan into place without having to pass a bill, to make the process easier. I was told that the idea was approved and that I would be contacted soon after. However, a plan was never put into place, and by the time we had decided to go back to Senate with the idea, it was too late in the semester for the bill to get approved.” Why is Chartwells, the company that runs the cafeteria, seemingly unconcerned with the plight of students with food allergies or dietary restrictions? One such student is Katherine Pearce, a sophomore, who has to eat gluten-free food for health reasons. She frequently struggles to find edible food, saying, “I often go to eat in the [cafeteria] only to find nothing I can eat. Even though a menu is provided, it just



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons

lists dish names and not ingredients. For example, the roast pork might be covered in gravy. Pork is gluten free, but gravy is not. Guessing about whether or not you can eat a dish takes the fun out of meals.” For Pearce’s sake, and others with similar allergies, hopefully Norris and fellow SGA members can hold Chartwells accountable as they attempt to once again bring the previously mentioned bill forward. Norris says, “The bill is something that the sophomore senators are hoping to get rolling again, and done this semester, to prevent any more allergic reactions from occurring to those that are unaware of what they’re eating.” Pearce agrees that such action by the cafeteria would be useful, though there still other problems that need to be addressed. “If the cafeteria labeled allergens, that would take a lot of stress out of my day. And since they list the menu online, why not list it there so I know when I can actually eat a full meal in the cafe? I also have had trouble with finding the gluten-free buns being moldy. Not only is that a health concern in general, it also does not make me feel comfortable about how allergies are viewed. If no one is checking the hamburger buns,

what else is being missed? Many of my friends also have special dietary needs, and it is frustrating. We just want to eat.” And for students who are vegan or vegetarian, or just looking for healthier options, finding a satisfying meal to eat is almost impossible. On an average week, the only choice available for these suffering students is a lackluster salad from the salad bar. And honestly, the salad bar is gross. For a company whose website champions their “commitment to health and wellness,” they seem to be more eager to provide ice cream toppings than a substantive meal. Good luck finding anything green in the cafeteria, besides your wasted money.

It seems unfair that we are forced to pay upwards of a thousand dollars each semester for this wholly disappointing meal plan. Especially considering that, should you choose the smallest meal plan of five meals a week, the corresponding flex dollars are nowhere near equivalent to the amount that would have spent on meals from the cafeteria. This means that students who have wised up to the disgusting nature of food in the dining hall are still forced to pay the same amount as those with nineteen meals, and

yet do not have enough money to supplement their meals with other options. So really, the only economical solution to avoid wasting money at the cafeteria is to not have a meal plan, an option unavailable to those who must live on campus.

For a student with a nineteen-meals-a-week plan, they receive a hundred flex dollars to use. A meal plan costs \$1,375 a semester, so subtracting the flex dollars, then nineteen meals a week for sixteen weeks costs \$1,275. This means that each individual meal costs approximately \$4.19. In contrast, a student with a five-meal-a-week meal plan still pays \$1,375 a semester, but only receives \$250 worth of flex dollars. That means they are paying \$1,125 dollars for only five meals a week, which comes out to around \$14 per meal! This means that by decreasing your meal plan in an attempt to escape the horrible cafeteria food, you are actually wasting your money.

Obviously there is a huge amount of money collected from our meal plans, but where in the world is it going? I suppose those three jars of ice cream toppings must have been very expensive.

UM says goodbye to Eclipse



By DR. PATTON

When my wife Cheryl and I first moved to Montevallo, she was working as an MSW in Psychiatric Social Work at UAB's outpatient program. We chose to live in Montevallo, a decision that gave me a 300 yard walk to work and gave her many long hours creeping up I-65 in the morning and then creeping back down in the late afternoon. After several years of this, and for some other reasons, she decided to step down from her position at UAB and to come make a life here in town.

We've both been used bookstore fans and she, at least, loves coffee (really, I never drink the stuff). Looking around town, she noticed that the lot the Eclipse sits on was overgrown and for sale, and wrote down a phone number from the small sign that acknowledged the lot's availability. I called the number and was told that I was speaking to the daughter of the owner, who was in the hospital, and

that I should call him there. After a lot of handwringing, I called the hospital number I had been given, and I spoke to the owner, who said, "I'm in the hospital! Talk to my daughter about this." This was the impasse we stayed at for a while.

One day, as we were out scrounging used books for the store (we were going to make it happen somewhere in town), Cheryl noticed that the landowner's daughter was having a yard sale. We pulled in to look for books (I had no idea whose house we were visiting) and as we were leaving, I noticed a very old man on the porch on an oxygen tube just looking at the goings-on. Cheryl told me that it was Lloyd—the owner of the property I had disturbed while he was in the hospital. After a few minutes of worrying about it, I decided I could at least go apologize to him. 40 minutes later, he decided he liked me and we had bought the property for the Eclipse on a handshake at a yard sale.

Between that moment and the opening of the shop was an indescribable blur of activity. My sister, Mary Maxwell, joined the effort and off we went. Figuring out what we were doing, buying equipment, getting permits and licenses—the list seemed endless. Cheryl and I were in the shop painting walls and finishing up details the day after 9/11. It was surreal.

And then we opened on 9/24. And then it became really surreal.

It took a few months for us to get more than the initial curiosity business—that's typical. But after people realized we were there for the long haul, it all got real.

We were so naïve to think we could just serve coffee and some pastries—people wanted more substantial food for lunch and even dinner. Since the customer is always right, we started selling soups, salads and sandwiches, even though we had only built the kitchen to handle fresh-brewed coffee and espresso drinks and locally baked goods. Then came the milk-

shakes. Once we started making them, it seemed like we did nothing but make milkshakes. For 16 years. And we added menu items, wine and beer, and from there on out, it got so hectic it's hard to remember what really went on.

What we do remember is the friendship, the loyalty, the live music and poetry, the College Night parties and the Life Raft Debate parties, the regular meeting times for groups, the spontaneous parties, watching parades from the porch and, in an odd way, the cats. Bighead, Sillyhead, F3, Willie, Doppelgänger and the others that weren't there long enough, they were the soul of the porch, and when they could get away with it, the soul of the inside as well.

Closing the Eclipse has been one of the hardest things we've ever done. We'd have never gotten through it if this had not been the type of community we knew we were setting up shop in.

Thank you all. For everything.

UM named School of Value

By UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

According to the newly released rankings by U.S. News & World Report, the University of Montevallo now ranks 13th on the regional south listing for Great Schools, Great Prices, which measures the value of education received.

For the majority of prospective college students and their families, cost is a major factor in determining which schools are viable options. Knowing which schools are best buys – which colleges provide students receiving financial aid with the highest quality education for the lowest price – is imperative.

To help provide that information, U.S. News surveys colleges and universities each year and ranks nearly 1,400 of them in different categories according to their methodology. The calculation used takes into account a school's academic quality and the net cost of attendance for a student who received the average level of need-based financial aid. The higher the quality of the program and the lower the cost, the better the deal. "At a time when students and families are rightfully focused on the

value of a college degree, the Montevallo family is proud that we are ranked at such a high level in U.S. News' Great Schools, Great Prices," said Dr. John W. Stewart III, president of the University of Montevallo.

The University also continues to rank as the 13th Best Public Regional University in the South, marking it as the highest ranked public regional-level university in the state.

Each year, UM is compared alongside several schools across 12 southern states. Despite the competition, UM manages impressive accolades in the publication's annual evaluations.

"We take very seriously our roles as stewards of public funds and our students' investment in their education and are pleased to be recognized for the extraordinary value of a UM degree," said Stewart.

Overall, Montevallo is ranked the 38th Best Regional University in the South, which includes public and private institutions. To learn more, visit U.S. News & World Report.

Outdoor Scholars receive honor

By UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

The University of Montevallo President's Outdoor Scholars Program was recently awarded the Conservation Educator of the Year Award at the 2017 Alabama Wildlife Federation Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards banquet.

The Alabama Wildlife Federation (AWF) held the banquet, co-sponsored by Alabama Power Company and PowerSouth Energy on Friday, Aug. 4 at The Marriott Legends at Capitol Hill in Prattville. Governor Kay Ivey provided opening remarks and assisted with the presentation of the awards.

The AWF Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards (GCAA) are the most respected conservation honors in the state of Alabama. Over the past 40 years, AWF has presented these awards to individuals and organizations that make great contributions to the conservation of Alabama's wildlife and related natural resources.

Established in 2015, The President's Outdoor Scholars Program at the University of Montevallo, is unique to Alabama, and focuses on students who are good stewards of our natural resources, while promoting promising careers associated with the outdoors and our natural resources.

The innovative program provides opportunities and encourages students to take part in hands-on hunting, angling, and a wide variety of outdoor activities as part of their education. Through their first-hand inter-

actions, the programs aim to ensure future leaders share the same conservation message.

The President's Outdoor Scholars Program also allows students to participate in outdoor-related seminars on management, marketing, game and fish laws, as well as the new Game Check system.

In their second year, the program provided 22 students with more than \$43,000 in scholarships and other related learning opportunities. This fiscal year, the number of students involved in the program has almost doubled. The program is reaching new heights while providing assistance to students with a passion for the outdoors and a commitment to conservation.

Additional sponsors for the banquet included Ralph and Catherine Martin, Stifel, Lee Thuston, Central Alabama Electric Cooperative, Talladega Superspeedway, Josh & Mary Virginia Mandell, First South Farm Credit, CDG Engineers & Associates, Manufacture Alabama, Lake Martin Resource Association, Russell Lands, Consolidated Construction Co., Canfor Southern Pine, and David & Kelly Thomas. The Westervelt Company and Hammer Construction sponsored the social event prior to the banquet. Alabama Gulf Seafood was sponsored by the Alabama Seafood Marketing Commission.